

A TO Z INDIA

English & Tamil Monthly Magazine
Volume 07 • Issue 02
September 2023

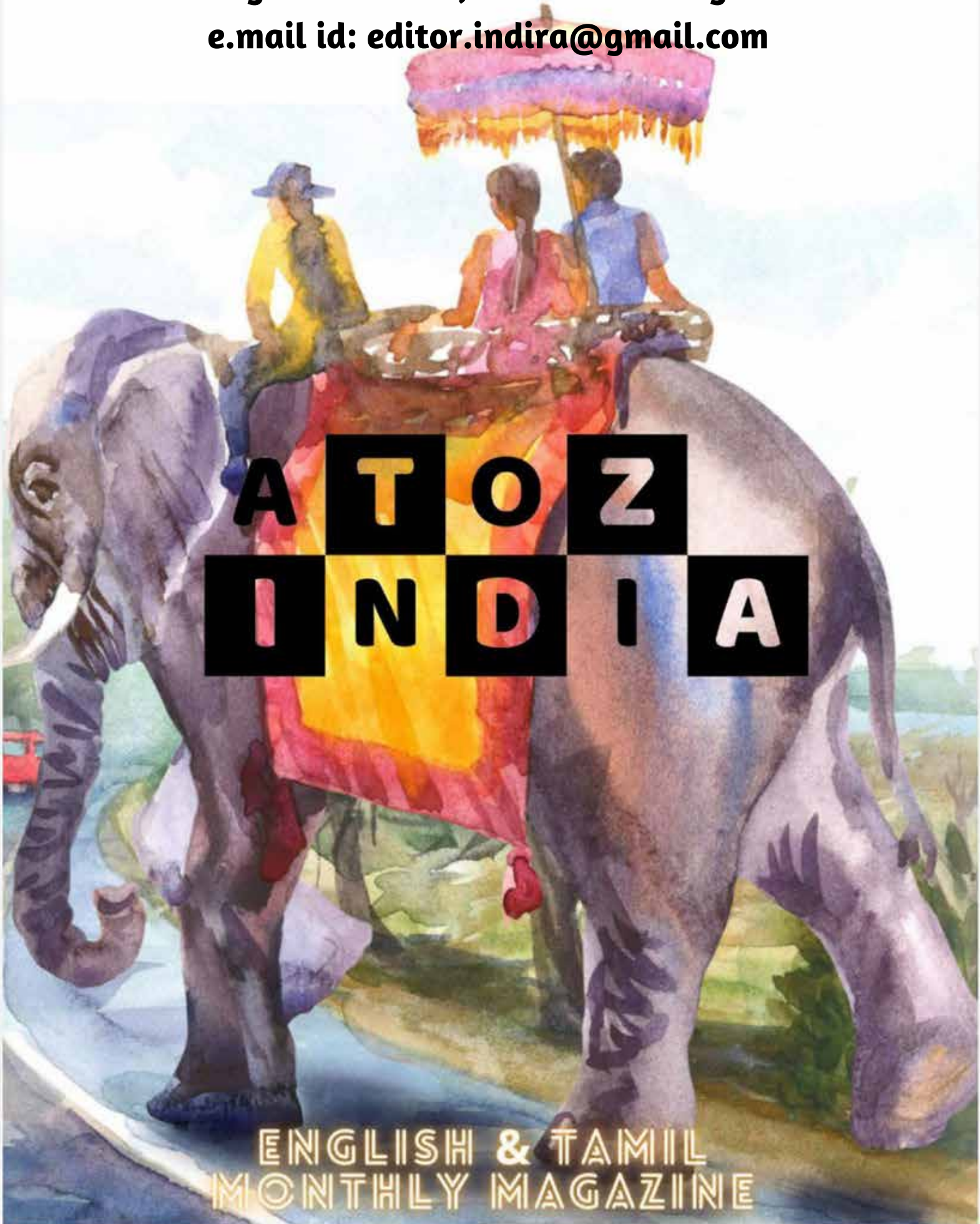
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Krishna Janmashtami 2023
06th September (Wednesday) in India
The birth of the God Krishna



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**ENGLISH & TAMIL
MONTHLY MAGAZINE**



04

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK: SIGNIFICANCE OF KRISHNA JAYANTHI OR KRISHNA JANMASHTAMI 2023

Krishna Janmashtami, or Krishna Jayanthi, celebrates the birth of Krishna, the 8th avatar of Vishnu. Krishna is one of the most popular gods in the Hindu pantheon. A master in the game of love, a strategist in war, a profound philosopher, a good friend, and protector, he is many things to many people.

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JANMASHTAMI 2023: CELEBRATING THE BIRTHDAY OF SHREE KRISHNA: THE FESTIVAL OF VICTORY OF VIRTUES OVER EVIL

Krishna Janmashtami 2023 date is September 6, 2023, a prominent Hindu holiday.

A TO Z INDIA: Editorial Address



inside

FROM THE EDITOR
A TO Z INDIA magazine covers the Indian through his art, culture, lifestyle, religion, etc. This magazine gives an insight into the life of Indians from an angle uncovered by others. Turn to find out what it is about and to immerse yourself into an entirely different culture.

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From the Editor's Desk: Significance of Krishna Jayanthi 2023

Birthdays of gods and goddesses are special occasions in India, especially among the Hindu community. There is a lot of fasting, feasting, and rejoicing as people celebrate the occasion with great fanfare and religious fervor. Krishna Janmashtami, celebrates the birth of Krishna, the 8th avatar of Vishnu. Krishna is one of the most popular gods in the Hindu pantheon. A master in the game of love, a strategist in war, a profound philosopher, a good friend, and protector, he is many things to many people. In the Mahabharata, he helps the Pandavas win the war against their greedy cousins. He saves Draupadi from dishonor. His strategies and wiles help the Pandavas outwit their foes. Most importantly, he helps Arjuna overcome his loss of nerve on the battlefield of Kurukshetra and rise to the occasion by performing his duty as a warrior. In short, the Mahabharata is unimaginable without Krishna. Krishna Jayanti 2023 falls on September 6–7. He was born at midnight to Vasudev and Devaki, the sister of King Kamsa of Mathura. The festival is also called Krishna Janmashtami, especially in North India. The festival has many names — Krishnashtami, Gokulashtami, Ashtami Rohini, Srikrishna Jayanti, and Srijayanti.



Janmashtami 2023:

Celebrating The Birthday of Shree Krishna

 Indira Sriavatsa

Krishna Janmashtami 2023 date is September 6, 2023, a prominent Hindu holiday celebrated with tremendous excitement and devotion across India and worldwide. Lord Krishna is one of Hinduism's most cherished and venerated deities, and his birth is commemorated with a variety of rites and festivities. Devotees fast, pray, and sing devotional songs on this day.



They frequently congregate at temples to take part in special celebrations commemorating Lord Krishna's birth. The reciting of holy books such as the Bhagavad Gita and the Bhagavata Purana, which include stories and teachings about Krishna's life, is generally part of the celebrations.

Historical Authenticity of Krishna Janmashtami:

The eighth day (Ashtami) of the Krishna Paksha (dark fortnight) in the month of Bhadrapada, which corresponds to August or September in the Gregorian calendar, is believed to be the Krishna birth date. Krishna Janmashtami or Krishnashtami 2023 commemorates his birth. According to the Hindu lunar calendar, the exact date of Lord Krishna's birth fluctuates from year to year so the date of Janmashtami also fluctuates. While Krishna Janmashtami is widely honoured in India and among Hindus around the world, the historical authenticity of the exact day of Krishna's birth is disputed, as old writings and calendars may not fully correspond with modern calendar systems. His birthday is more of a spiritual and cultural observance than a historically proven date.

Krishna Janmashtami or **KrishnaJayanthi 2023** has a deeper meaning that goes beyond mere celebration. It is a powerful reminder of Lord Krishna's divine birth, which brought a message of righteousness, love, and devotion with it. Janmashtami becomes more than a ritual as followers gather to honour his teachings and playful interactions; it becomes a source of spiritual nourishment. So, if you are wondering **how to celebrate Janmashtami at home**, you can refer to above mentioned options where you will enjoy the celebration.

The festival's celebration of togetherness, both between individuals and between mankind and the divine, emphasises Krishna's ageless knowledge. Janmashtami embodies a range of life's lessons, from the military precepts of the Bhagavad Gita to recollections of his boyhood shenanigans.



On the eve of Janmashtami, 6th Sept., 2023:

Shri Krishna is our True National Hero

 Lalit Garg

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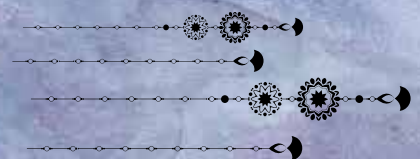


Shri Krishna is a wonderful and unique national hero of our culture. The character of Shri Krishna is the popular character of a folk hero. He is also the ruler of Dwarka estate, but never addressed as 'King Sri Krishna,' instead, he is Brajnandan. Symmetry in society and the national system was his duty, that's why he never shirked away from his duty, and then religion became his self-discipline, that's why he never rejected it. He remained conscious in the combination of both Pauritti and Nivritti. Only the ideals of Shri Krishna will pave the way for establishing peace in our nation and the world. This mystery has to be understood as to how Shri Krishna implemented the ideal politics, practical democracy, social harmony, integral humanism and disciplined military and war operations. What kind of policy and intentions are required for the all-round development of any nation? The answers to all these questions are found in the life-story of Shri Krishna.

The entire life of Shri Krishna is synonymous with the cultural nationalism of India. The world has come to know India only through his ideals. With the re-establishment of his ideals the world will know and respect India again. Politically astute vision, suppression of evil people, traitors, criminals and corrupt people, determination to keep promises, vow of surrender for the national interest, liberation of innocent people, elimination of disparities, harmony among differences, prevention of mutual enmity, self-accepted self-restraint, everyone's involvement in the national work. Cooperation, control of religious power on royal power and renunciation of power to fulfill all these etc. qualities of Shri Krishna are the national life and cultural values of India. In fact, Shri Krishna was a thinker of that order, which transcends the limits of time, and reaches the eternal and infinite. Whenever injustice increases, a national leader like Shri Krishna has to incarnate, as Shri Krishna Himself has said in the Geeta – Yada-yada hi dharmasya glanirbhavati bhārata, abhyutthanam dharmasya tadatmanam srijamyham.

That is, a national leader needs to be born only to counter injustice. One who arouses the consciousness of the entire public in such a way that the entire society moves like a flood in the desired direction in which he wants to take the entire society and not even the highest mountain peak can stop its strong flow. Shri Krishna was also such a national leader, on whose instructions all the Gop-Gopis left Braj and united against the Demon King Kansa. Even though Goshwami Tulsidas was far away from power in the medieval period, his great work Ramcharitmanas still remains a favourite among the masses and even today Tulsi's name is resonating in most parts of India; more than that of any ruling king, king or emperor.

Similarly, recently Mahatma Gandhi was completely away from power. He did not hold the post of Congress President even once. But during his lifetime, he had given direction to the Congress and to the then society and to the entire nation. Jayaprakash Narayan had changed the government by calling for a complete revolution in the country; not because he was in power, but he had public power and that is why he was called 'Loknayak'.



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Shri Krishna is our True National Hero



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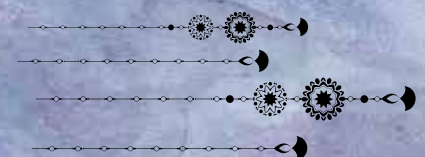
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He had won immense trust of the people. Today world's largest organization Rashtriya Swayam Sevak Sangh and its Sangh- Director Shri Mohan Bhagwat are also such folk heroes. Loknayak or Jannayak is actually a national leader. Shri Krishna was such a hero during his era. At that time, the rulers of the world used to hover around him in such a way, as if there was a ring of his quadrilateral cycle. Shri Krishna handed over the power to other people, and remained detached from the power. In fact, Shri Krishna could become our national hero only because he played an important role in mobilizing the people's power.

Shri Krishna's personality and his works are multi-faceted and multi-coloured, covering all the characteristics of leadership, i.e. political skill, intelligence, tact, war strategy, personal charm, political charisma, love, gravity, happiness, sorrow and whatnot? For a patriot, Lord Krishna is not only God, but also a teacher who teaches the art of living life as a successful citizen. Due to various characteristics of his personality, he attained the status of a superhero in Indian culture. On one hand, he was a knower of politics, and on the other hand, he was a great scholar of philosophy. Taking leadership in the religious, political and social spheres, he promoted the syncretic religion of knowledge-action-devotion. On the basis of his qualifications, he was a Yugapurush, who later on was accepted as Yuvaavatar. We remember Him as a great revolutionary hero. He was a philosopher, a thinker, a messenger of Karma and Sankhya Yoga through Geeta and a policy director of the Mahabharata war, but for the simple Brajuasis, he was a music maker, a butter thief, the mischievous Kanhaiya who broke the pots of the Gopis and befooled Gopis. This is the expression in the Gita – “O Arjuna! The devotee who worships me with the same feelings, I also worship him in the same way. We see the same characteristics in our Prime Minister Narendra Modi also, because by assimilating the life ideals of Shri Krishna, he is creating a strong India - a new vibrant India!

There was such a beautiful coordination of different types of qualities in the life of Shri Krishna that on one hand, he could enjoy the common people; on the other hand, he could uproot and throw away the teeth of an intoxicated elephant like Kuvalaya Peed with his own hands. This coordination of amazing abilities puts Shri Krishna in a completely different league from other heroes. The significance of Shri Krishna encompassing ideological and practical ground, which flowed uninterruptedly in the Indian society, was implemented by Chanakya through diplomacy, Tulsidas through devotion, Gandhi through service, Jayaprakash Narain through the public awareness, Mohan Bhagwat through organizational skills proved the practical usefulness of thinking. Shri Ram, despite being in power, always remained unattached to it in the same way as a lotus leaf remains unattached to it even though it lives in the intoxicating water. Shri Krishna took this tradition of Shri Ram even further. Shri Ram was in power for some time in his life, but Shri Krishna always remained away from political power. He placed other people in power, but continued worshipping himself.



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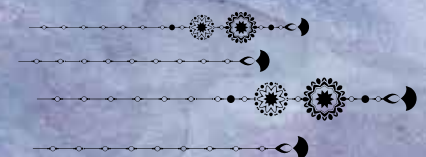


His humility was to such an extent that when everyone was assigned work in Rajsuya Yagya, Shri Krishna himself took the responsibility of making people pick up used utensils! Such was his humility! The result of this humility was that the crown jewels of all the kings kept falling at his feet. Because of these qualities, even today we consider him the master-practitioner of sixteen arts. No other person in the whole of India from ancient times to the modern times could receive this honour!

The person who stays away from power, and gives direction to the entire nation, despite being away, is a true national leader. The life of a national leader is one of sacrifice. There is no desire for wealth in his life. Lord Shri Ram was handed over the throne by his father Dasharatha. He could have remained on that throne. But he was detached from power. Shri Krishna also joins the same tradition. Three qualities were especially present in Him - sacrifice, detachment from power and amazing ability to organize people's power. Due to these three qualities, Shri Krishna succeeded in bringing about the change in the era as per his wish. The ideological level of Shri Krishna was much higher than the practical level. However, he coordinated his ideological and practical plans in such a way that it was not even known where the two streams merged into each other.

The character of Shri Krishna as a national leader is also very divine. Everyone gets drawn towards them. The one who attracts everyone towards himself, paves the path of devotion, removes the sins of the devotees, he is Shri Krishna. He is an ideal character who is a psychologist while diagnosing Arjun's mental distress, an incarnation of Dharma, while killing demons like Kansa, an ideal politician while countering self-interested politics, the best musician in the form of Vishwa Mohini Bansi Bajaiya, the Brijvasi. In front of Sudama, He is Premavatar, an ideal friend; in the form of Sudarshan Chakradhari, there is a warrior and pioneer of social revolution. Even the smallest incidents of His life prove that he was blessed with omniscience. He was the embodiment of religion and a skilled politician.

The administrative and political character of Shri Krishna is very super-natural; in short his overall thought philosophy has only one message - Karma. It is only through karma that it is possible to suppress the harmful tendencies of the society, and replace them with noble tendencies. Shri Krishna's personality is full of infinite compassion. But it is rare to find somebody else tougher than Him who opposes injustice and oppression. The same Shri Krishna who used to run barefoot for the sake of the one who loved him, the same Shri Krishna also became extremely harsh and ruthless in punishing the wicked. While preaching Geeta, Shri Krishna had told Arjun that there is no benefit in living under the influence of attachment. All these relatives are worth saying, but you have to emphasize on the delivery of knowledge, action and devotion to achieve your objective. Many legends and myths are prevalent about Shri Krishna.



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But there is a need to make a proper and rational historical evaluation of them in the contemporary context.

Shri Krishna has become the nurturer of rural culture. He gave unprecedented respect to cows in his time. He was conscious about the health and eating habits of cows and cowherds. While he revered the butter, milk and curd extracted from the hard work of cowherds as health protectors, he also prevented these priceless things from being given to Kansa as 'tax'. They wanted these things to be consumed in villages only. The form of Shri Krishna as a butter thief was not only a direct challenge to the autocratic power, but at the same time, it was also an encouragement to rural culture. Today, on the birth anniversary of Shri Krishna - Janmashtami, India is expected to be built on his teachings, life ideals and principles, only then Hindus will be strong, only then India will be able to become a Hindu nation in the true sense.



Paryushan Parv- 12-19 September, 2023:

Paryushan Parv: A Spiritual Path of Peace, non-violence

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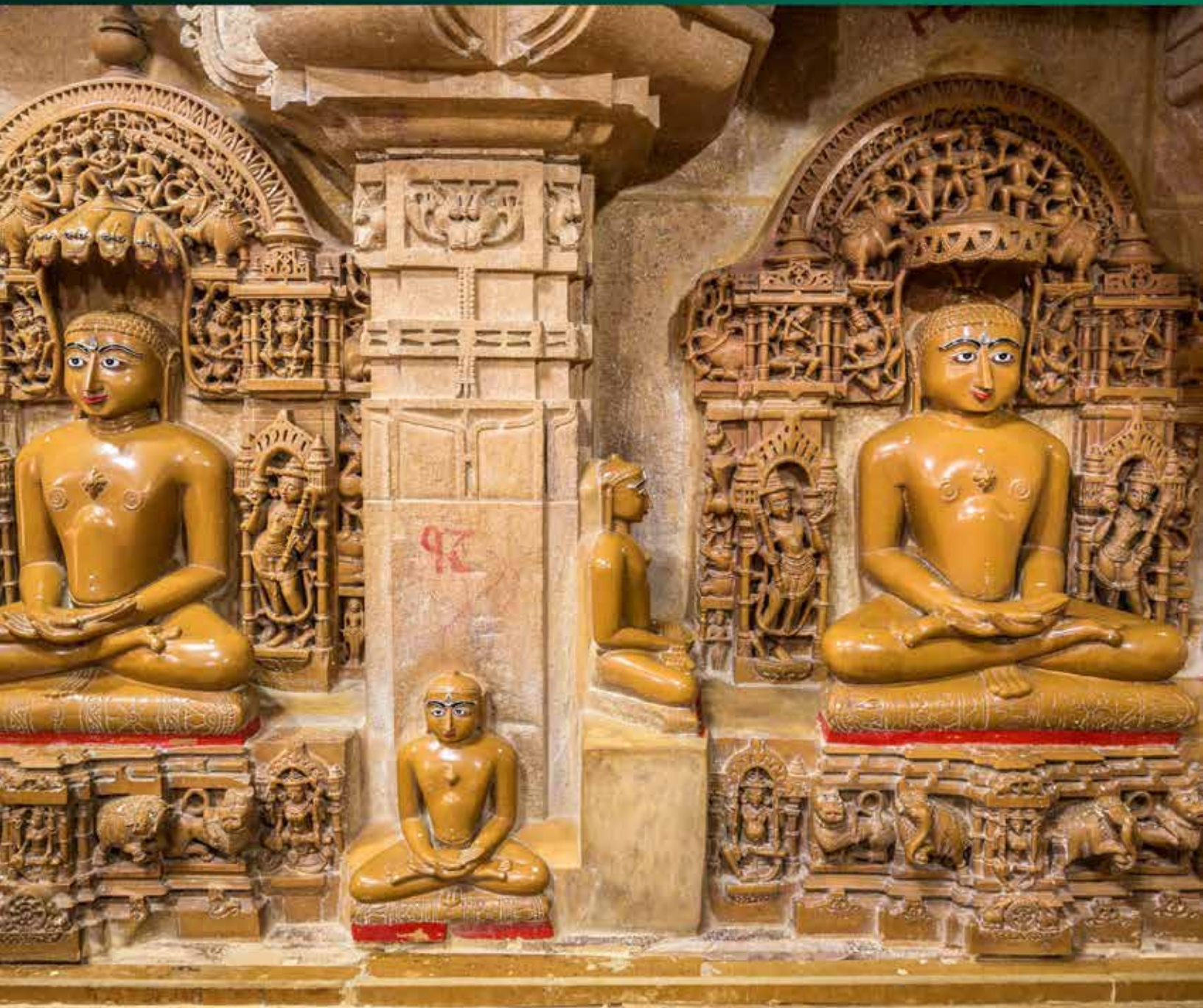
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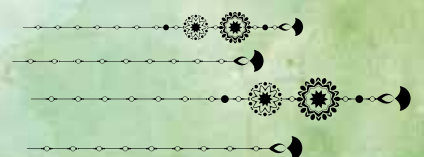
Everyone wants to live a life which is full of peace and happiness, but they can't live this type of life. That is why in the Jain tradition, the spiritual festival Paryushan is celebrated, which will be held this year from September 12 to September 19, 2021. In these eight days of Paryushan Mahaparv, all Jain devotees will make efforts to make the body and mind spiritual. ParyushanParva has a great importance in the lives of Jains. It's a period in which every Jain tries to purify and elevate his soul. For this purpose a shravak must perform the following five duties: Amari Pravartan (Total non-violence), Sadharmic Bhakti (helping people of same faith), Kshamapan (asking for forgiveness), Atham Tap (fasting for three days) and Chaitya Pari Paati (Visiting local Jain temples). In eight days; a positive environment will be created, which will purify our life. From this point of view, this festival is a festival of spirituality as well as upliftment of life.

Paryushan Mahaparva is a medium to worship the inner soul - it is the festival of self-purification, self-enlightenment. In fact, the Paryushan Mahaparva is such a dawn which takes us from sleep to wakefulness. This festival leads us from the darkness of ignorance to the light of knowledge. While doing penance, chanting, and self-study, we can find our inner strength and will get to know that real happiness lies in forgiving.

The literal meaning of Paryushan Mahaparva is to be residing in the soul. One of the meanings of Paryushana is the destruction of karma. The bad Karmas will be destroyed and only then the soul will be purified in its natural form, hence Paryushan Mahaparva gives inspiration to the soul; to become selfless and pure. This Mahaparva mainly focuses on the connection between humans and humans and motivates them; it is the festival of opening the windows, skylights and doors of the mind.

Paryushan Mahaparva is not just a festival of Jains, it is a universal festival. It is a great and excellent festival for the whole world, because the soul is worshiped in it. This is the only festival in the whole world in which a person becomes self-realized by being self-absorbed and tries to attain salvation by ascending to the peak of supernatural, spiritual bliss. The Paryushan Mahaparva has its own unique and special spiritual significance in the renunciation-oriented culture of Jainism. This is the only inspiring festival of self-purification. It is the most recognized festival of Jain people. Paryushan Mahaparva is an occasion for many types of rituals like chanting, austerity, sadhna, worship, meditation, food restraints etc.

Paryushan Mahaparva is a spiritual festival, the central element of it is the soul. Paryushan Mahaparva continues to play an important role in revealing the pure, luminous form of the soul. Adhyatma means closeness to the soul. Paryushan Mahaparva is the symbol of Jain unity. Jain people give utmost importance to it. The entire Jain society becomes awake and engaged in spiritual practice on the occasion of this festival. In the Digambara tradition, it is recognized as "Daslakshana Parva".



Paryushan Parv: A Spiritual Path of Peace, non-violence



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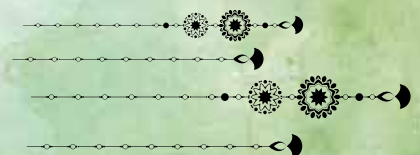
Among them, its opening day is Bhadrav Shukla Panchami and the day of prosperity is Chaturdashi. On the other hand, in the Shwetambar Jain tradition, the day of Bhadrav Shukla Panchami is the day of Samadhi which is celebrated as Samuatsari with complete renunciation, fasting, self-study and abstinence. Even people who are unable to take time out during the year also wake up on this day. Even those who never fast are seen performing rituals on this day.

The theme of Paryushan Mahaparva is to destruct all the evil thoughts of mind and soul. The 10 gates of religion have been mentioned, in which the first door is forgiveness. Forgiveness means equality. Forgiveness is very important for life, unless there is no forgiveness in life, and then a person cannot progress on the path of spirituality. Lord Mahavir lived a life of forgiveness i.e. equality. No matter what the situation may have come, he remained equal in all circumstances. "Forgiveness is the jewel of the hero" - Only great people can take and give forgiveness. Paryushan Mahaparva is the celebration of the exchange of forgiveness. On this day everyone unravels the entangled glands of their mind, opens the knots of anger and hatred within them, they hug each other. Eliminate the mistakes made in the past through forgiveness and make life pure.

The end of Paryushan Mahaparva is celebrated as Forgiveness Day. In this way, Paryushan Mahaparva and Forgiveness Day - it is a festival to bring each other closer. It is a festival to consider each other as our own. It is also said in the Gita - "Atmoupamyen sarvatrah, same pashyati yorjuna" - "Shri Krishna said to Arjuna - O Arjuna! Treat the human as your equal. Lord Mahavira said- "Mitti mai Savva bhuesu, veranmijhana kenai" I have friendship with all beings; I have no enmity with anyone.

Human unity, peaceful co-existence, friendship, socialism without exploitation, establishment of international moral values, non-violent life, support of the worship style of soul etc. are the main basis of Paryushan Mahaparva. From this point of view, efforts are expected to make this great festival a festival of the people. Whether a man is called religious or not, whether he believes in self-Parmatma or not, whether he believes in past birth and reincarnation, whether he should resort to non-violence as far as possible in solving any of his problems - this is the heart of the sadhna of Payushan. Violence cannot be a permanent solution to any problem. Those seeking a solution through violence have only exacerbated the problem. Keeping this fact in front, not only the Jain society, but also the common people should become faithful in the power of non-violence and use it with deep faith.

Paryushan is a festival of pleasure in the soul, a festival of self-purification and self-enhancement. This Mahaparva makes us become ego free. This Mahaparva is a celebration of worship of non-violence. Today the whole world needs the non-violence and friendship. Paryushan Parv is a festival of destruction of all negative aspects of the soul and by this one can find the real meaning of life. Each day of the Paryushan festival focuses on eliminating various impurities like anger, pride, deceit and greed and building good virtues



Paryushan Parv- 12-19 September, 2023:

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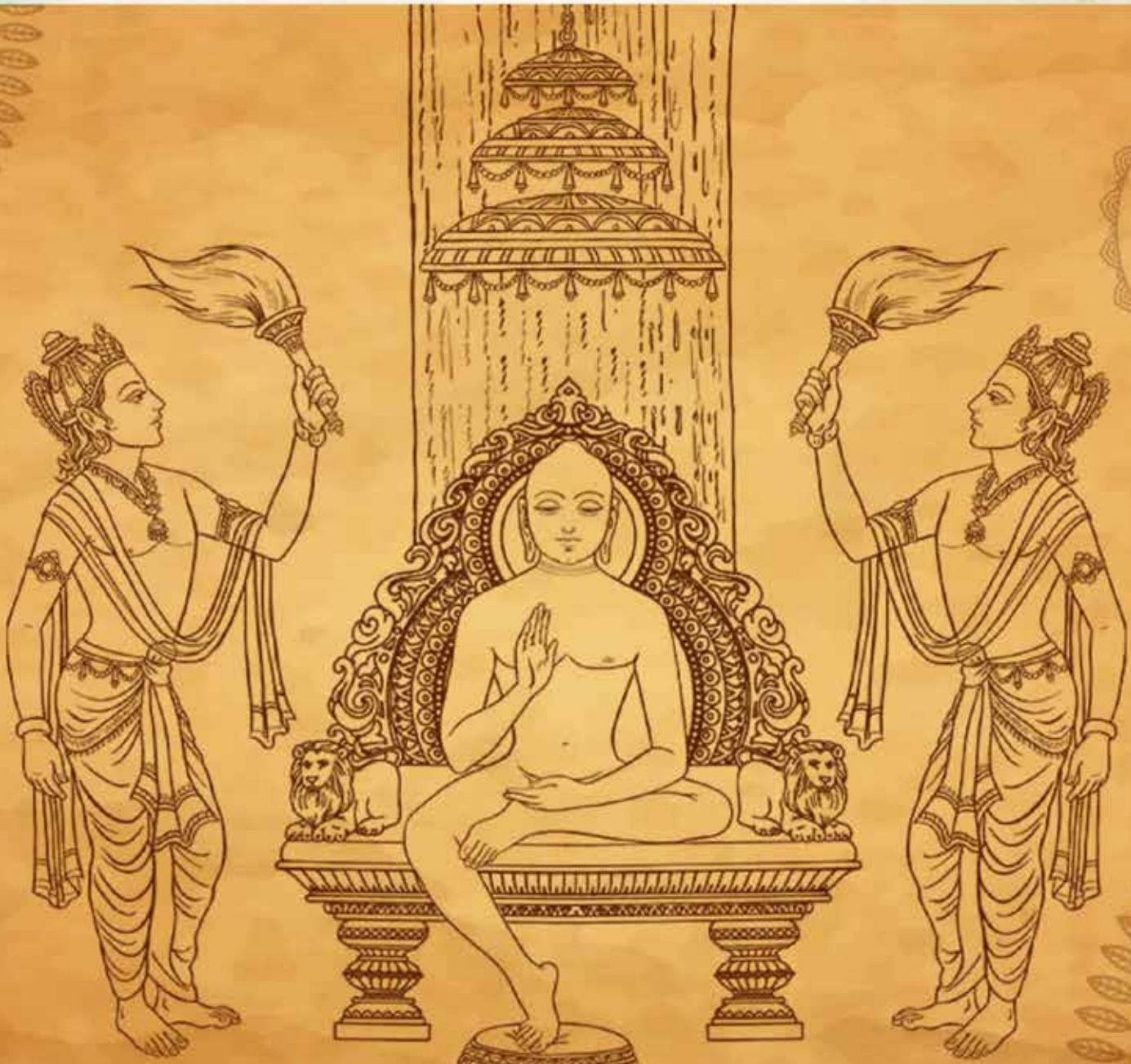
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Today, the main problems like violence, terror, mutual hatred, Naxalism, corruption, corona epidemic have become a big cause of concern not only for the country but for the world and everyone wants a solution to these problems. For those people, the festival of Paryushan is an inspiration, a path, guidance and a practice of non-violent lifestyle. Today, in the glare of materiality, it is more important to maintain the relevance of this festival in the blind race of running life. For this, Jain society should become sensitive, especially the younger generation should be aware of the value of Paryushan festival and they themselves should be benefited from these rare moments of awakening self-consciousness through sharing, silence, chanting, meditation, self-study, dietary restraint, sense control, life-day etc. and explore the pure essence of this auspicious festival in front of the people.





62nd Teachers' Day Celebration:

The birthday of Dr Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan



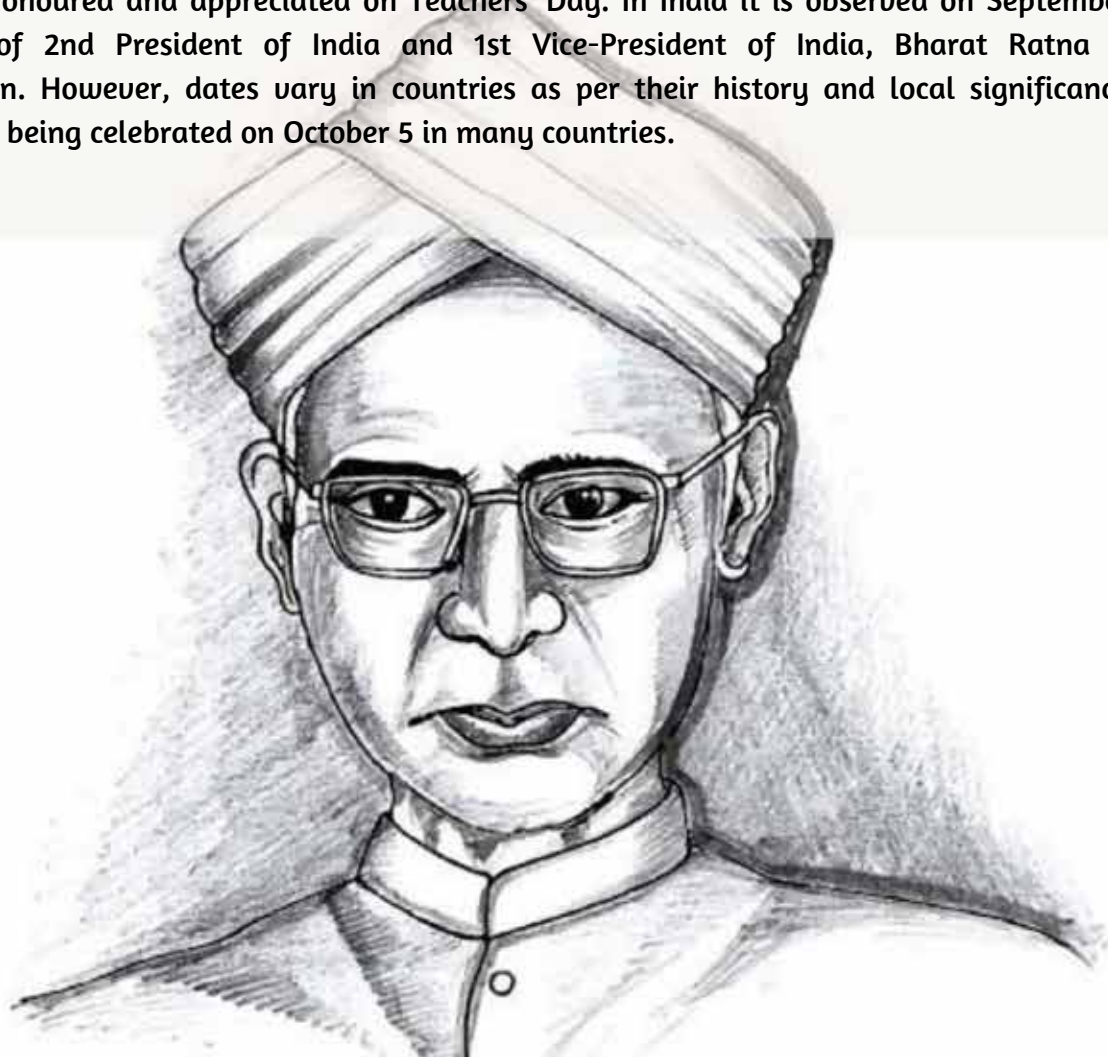
The birthday of Dr Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan (5 September) is celebrated as Teachers' Day in India since 1962. 5 October is celebrated annually as World Teachers' Day, also known as International Teachers Day since 1994. Traditionally in India Guru Purnima is celebrated to honour and pay respect to Gurus and Teachers.

62nd Teachers' Day Celebration:

The birthday of Dr Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan (5 September) is celebrated as Teachers' Day in India since 1962. 5 October is celebrated annually as World Teachers' Day, also known as International Teachers Day since 1994. Traditionally in India Guru Purnima is celebrated to honour and pay respect to Gurus and Teachers.

Why do we celebrate Teachers' Day?

Teachers' Day is a day dedicated in honour of teachers and is celebrated every year around the world to acknowledge and recognize the significance of teachers in lives of students; the future of citizens of a nation. Hence, teachers being one of the most important parts of society, moulding young and thus the future of the country are honoured and appreciated on Teachers' Day. In India it is observed on September 5, the birth anniversary of 2nd President of India and 1st Vice-President of India, Bharat Ratna Dr Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan. However, dates vary in countries as per their history and local significance with World Teachers' Day being celebrated on October 5 in many countries.





62nd Teachers' Day Celebration:

The birthday of Dr Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan

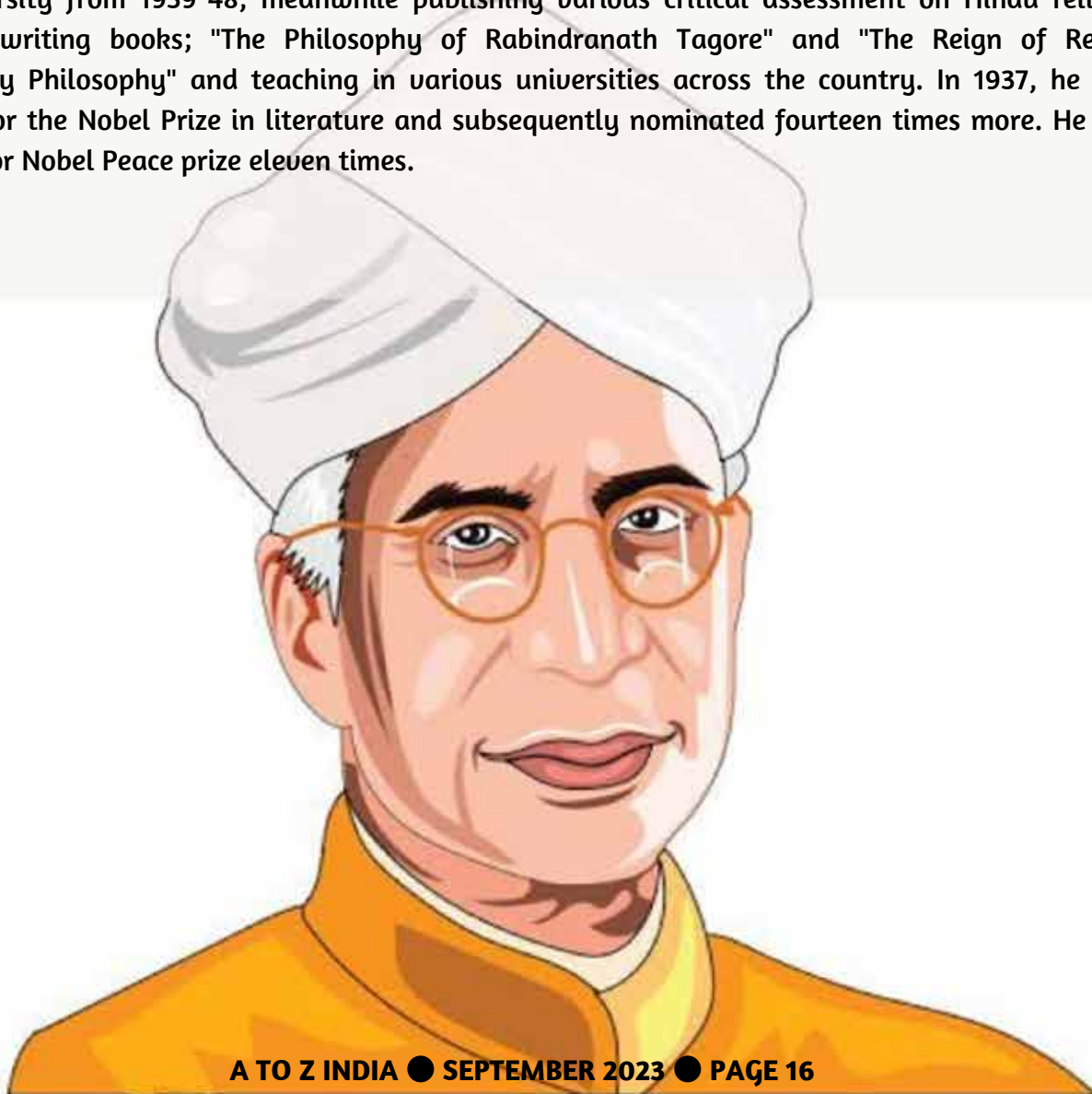


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Who was Dr Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan?

In India, Teachers' Day has been celebrated since 1962 on September 5, birth anniversary of Dr Radhakrishnan, 2nd President of India. Dr Radhakrishnan was born on September 5, 1888, in a Telugu family in a village near Thiruttani of erstwhile Madras Presidency, British India. He studied Philosophy in University of Madras and remained one of the finest Philosophers and scholars of Modern India, presenting a critical and comprehensive analysis of Vedanta branch of Hindu Philosophy.

He assumed the office of Vice-Chancellor of Andhra University from 1931-36 and Vice-Chancellor of Banaras Hindu University from 1939-48, meanwhile publishing various critical assessment on Hindu religion and Philosophy, writing books; "The Philosophy of Rabindranath Tagore" and "The Reign of Religion in Contemporary Philosophy" and teaching in various universities across the country. In 1937, he was also nominated for the Nobel Prize in literature and subsequently nominated fourteen times more. He was also nominated for Nobel Peace prize eleven times.





62nd Teachers' Day Celebration: The birthday of Dr Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan



The birthday of Dr Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan (5 September) is celebrated as Teachers' Day in India since 1962. 5 October is celebrated annually as World Teachers' Day, also known as International Teachers Day since 1994. Traditionally in India Guru Purnima is celebrated to honour and pay respect to Gurus and Teachers.

After the independence of India, Dr Radhakrishnan served as the first Vice-President from 1952-57 and for the 2nd term from 1957-62. He then succeeded Dr Rajendra Prasad as the second President of India in 1962 till 1967. For his contributions and accomplishments, he was awarded India's highest civilian honour Bharat Ratna in 1954. Dr Radhakrishnan took his last breath at the age of 86 on April 17, 1975, in Madras, Tamil Nadu.

Celebrations:

Although, not a holiday, schools and colleges instead of conducting regular classes, dedicate the day for celebrating the contribution of teachers and their significance in society. Students organize various events as an expression of their love, respect and gratitude for teachers. In schools, students give flowers and greeting cards to teachers, touch their feet for blessings and participate in skits and plays depicting the importance of the teacher-student relationship and significance of teachers in general. Speeches are also made by students and teachers on the day. In present times, students send messages to their teachers and write wishes on various social media platforms.

Teachers' Day in other countries:

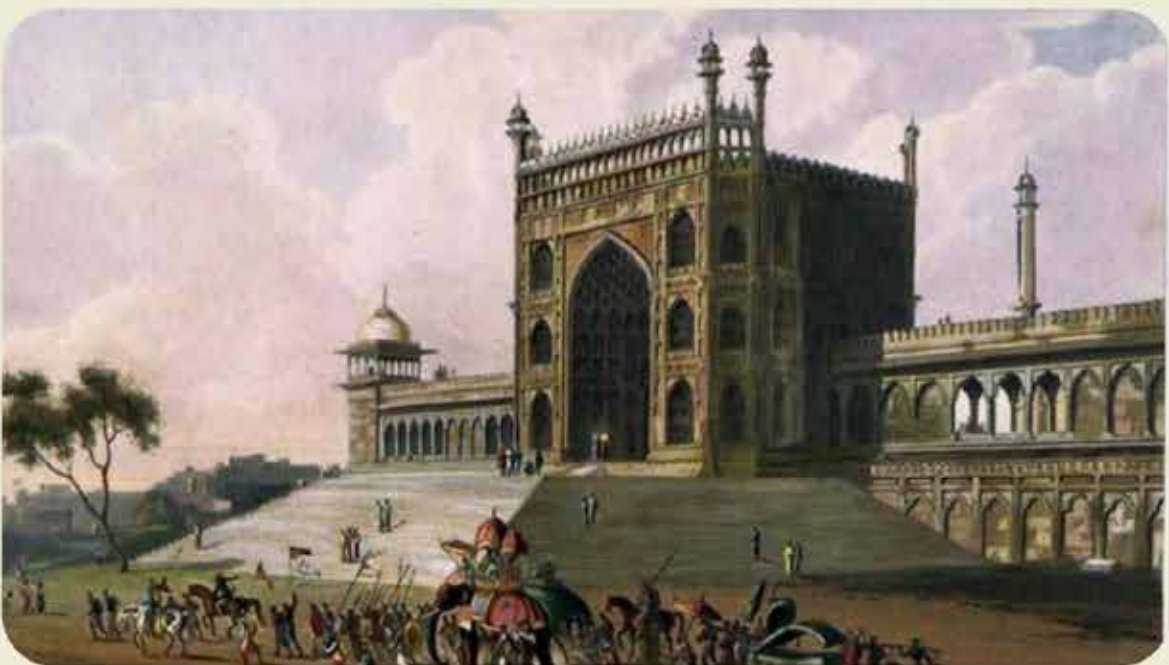
Teachers' Day is celebrated in almost all countries of the world, but dates vary with local significance. Generally, it is celebrated on the day commemorating in honour of individuals who have made great contributions in their respective countries in the field of education and knowledge. China celebrates it on September 10, the United Kingdom on May 9; the United States of America celebrates National Teacher Day on the Tuesday of the first week of the May. Many countries celebrate Teachers' Day on October 5. In 1994, October 5 was adopted as World Teachers' Day or International Teachers Day.



***Incredible India:
Images of
India
through
Paintwork***



 **Chandra**



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In 2023, Mahakaali Jayanti will be celebrated on 06 September , Goddess Kaali appeared in the manifestation of Mohini to kill Madhu and Kaitambh. The day when goddess appears in front of Lord Brahma from the body parts of Lord Shiva such as eyes, face, nose and arms, is celebrated as Mahakaali Jayanti. She was born for the destruction of devils.

2023, MAHAKAALI JAYANTI



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Built by Kumargupta 1 of Gupta Empire:

Nalanda University



It was built by Kumargupta 1 of Gupta Empire in the 5th century A.D. and remained the best without any hindrance for over 800 years with around 10,000 students and nearly 2700 faculties who came from all over the world (Korea, Japan, China, Tibet, Indonesia, and many more).

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At that point of time, the Library was a very prestigious and renowned repository of the Buddhist knowledge throughout the world. The library of the Nalanda University was called Dharma Gunj which meant the “Mountain of Truth”. The library constituted of three main buildings, which stood up to nine stories. It was composed of hundreds and thousands of volumes of books. This is quite evident from the fact that it took about 3-6 months for it to burn down completely, at the time when it was set aflame by the Muslim invaders. The three library buildings were called upon by their respective names that included Ratnasagara-The Sea of Jewels, Ratnarañjaka-Delighter of Jewels and Ratnodadhi-The Ocean of Jewels.

Knowledge was and remains the jewel in Sanatana Dharma.





Flemington near New Jersey:
Mahaperiyava Mani Mandapam



Nestled between the fashion and financial capital of the world and the busy techies starting up new tech inventions, fuelled by the brains from South of India lies a spiritual paradise. Yes, a Mahaperiyava Mani Mandapam at Flemington near New Jersey.

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Yes, a Mahaperiyava Mani Mandapam at Flemington near New Jersey. It was like walking into platform no 9 3/4 out of a Harry Potter movie into another magical world.

The beautiful temple between lovely meadows decorated by bright orange fall colours took us by awe. Serene atmosphere, welcomed by a miniature Nandhi into the sanctum sanctorium of Periyava , flanked by Lord Ganesha, Muruga and Kamakshi. The atmosphere was just mesmerizing.

Cut to the suave Indian born US citizens visiting the shrine and living in and around that area. Tuxedos were replaced by Pancha kacham, midis by madisaar as the devotion seen and the scene was like a flashback of pre independence agraharams.





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The blind devotion to Periyava, the unbelievable initiative to build the temple, the sacredness and the tradition around, the bonhomie of the tamilian families, the music and the festival culture from these unadulterated people who were probably transported from kanchipuram in spiritual brooms.

The mouth that opened in awe took some to close, after drinking in the atmosphere and when it closed, it could utter nothing more than...

Maha Periyava Sharanam !





Deepavali:

A sketch inspired by Gopulu from a Deepavali malar



Deepavali those days was not just a festival. It was a festivity and phenomenon. Simplicity with childish happiness included the culmination of people, laughter, fragrance, noise and munching of eats and crunching of memories. The camaraderie of the 1960's and 70's, I doubt could ever be replaced by the technology and pompous blast of the current day.

When I got down to do a sketch inspired by Gopulu from a Deepavali malar my restless mind got engulfed with colourful thoughts from a black and white era.

Deepavali 50 years back began atleast 2 weeks before that day. Relatives started to descend, with frequent trips to central station to receive and carry their luggage. The rich ascended taxis while the others squeezed into 'jutkas'.

Textiles and clothes were a simple affair, traders visiting us with saree bundles directly from the 'thari' or a visit to Nallis and as a young boy I was treated to the fragrance of fresh fabric as I alternated training my eyes on the saree selection on one-side and the vibrant road traffic on the other. Elite and middle class thronged this shop while there was a desperate night watchman next door literally begging them to visit the adjoining Lakshmana Sah...

'Bakshanams' was not a simple affair as the recipe and selection of sweet meats would occupy the drawing hall discussions for over a week and after the ingredients arrive, the women folk would set off to prepare them meticulously with some of us providing the nuisance value and dipping unclean hands into hot boondhi for first day first taste. This was incidentally the only festival where the tasting was allowed before 'neivedyam'.

Crackers was also well thought of with relatives in govt offices already ordering a box directly from Sivakasi and with small charities provided, we children replenishing them with small quantities of 'vedi' and 'busuanam' as and when our pockets got filled from generous uncles or aunts.

With the previous night belonging to potato and vengaya sambar the early morning ritual was the one we looked forward to. At around 3 am woken up to deafening sounds of lakshmi vedi we will make a beeline to the bathrooms where hot water in a boiler with 'seehakai' podi awaited us. But not before hot oil was slapped on to our heads by kind hands that also thrust the not so delicious pungent 'Deepavali marundu' on our throats.

After bath and wearing the only set of new clothes smeared with turmeric and kumkum in all possible sharp corners we will set off outside for our first cracker burst on some days dampened by an early morning drizzle.



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With dawn still approaching, the nadaswaram from the radio would be stiff competition to our bursting sounds until the 'abaswaram' wind pipes from the morning gypsy visitors with their cattle arrived on our compound gates.

As the first ray of sunlight started falling, hot idlies started melting on our mouths accompanied by the inaugural bakshanams and then the visits started. Relatives visiting us and we visiting elders would be a ritual with our eyes always trained on the small colour note between their fingers neatly folded and kept ready for us as soon as we completed our prostrating.

As the women folk were busy comparing the inches and sizes of their 'jarigai' on their pattu pudavai, we were making a comparative analysis of whose compound had the most burnt papers out of our early morning cracker episodes.

We really do not remember a major craze for a Deepavali movie release as there were no early morning shows. Probably an 'oli chitram' of a sivaji cinema on radio which a few inhabitants had their ears tuned to. Elders focussed on the 'Deepavali malars' with interesting stories, articles and spiritual messages.

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Well, I am sure there would be another generation after 40 years talking about a festival that atleast existed before !

Happy Diwali (Deepavali shortened)

Source: Narayan Swamy, Facebook



Deepavali:

A sketch inspired by Gopulu from a Deepavali malar



TSN...
11/11/23



நேர்மறை எண்ணங்கள்:

அதேசமயம் அந்த படிக்கட்டுக்களின் மேல் ஏறி, மிதித்து உள்ளே செல்கிறீர்கள் என்றால், மனதுக்குள் இருக்கும் அத்தனை எதிர்மறை எண்ணங்களையும் மனதுக்குள் சுமந்து கொண்டே தான் கோவிலுக்குள் வருகிறேன் என்று அர்த்தம்.

இறைவன் குடியிருக்கும் கோவில் என்பது, நாள் முழுவதும் கூறப்படுகின்ற மந்திரங்களினாலும் நாதஸ்வரம், கெட்டி மேளங்கள் போன்ற மங்களகரமான இசையினாலும் முழுக்க முழுக்க நேர்மறை அதிர்வுகளால் நிரம்பியிருக்கும். அதனாலேயே அந்த நுழைவு வாயிலைத் தாண்டிச் செல்ல வேண்டும் என்பது தான் ஐதீகம்.







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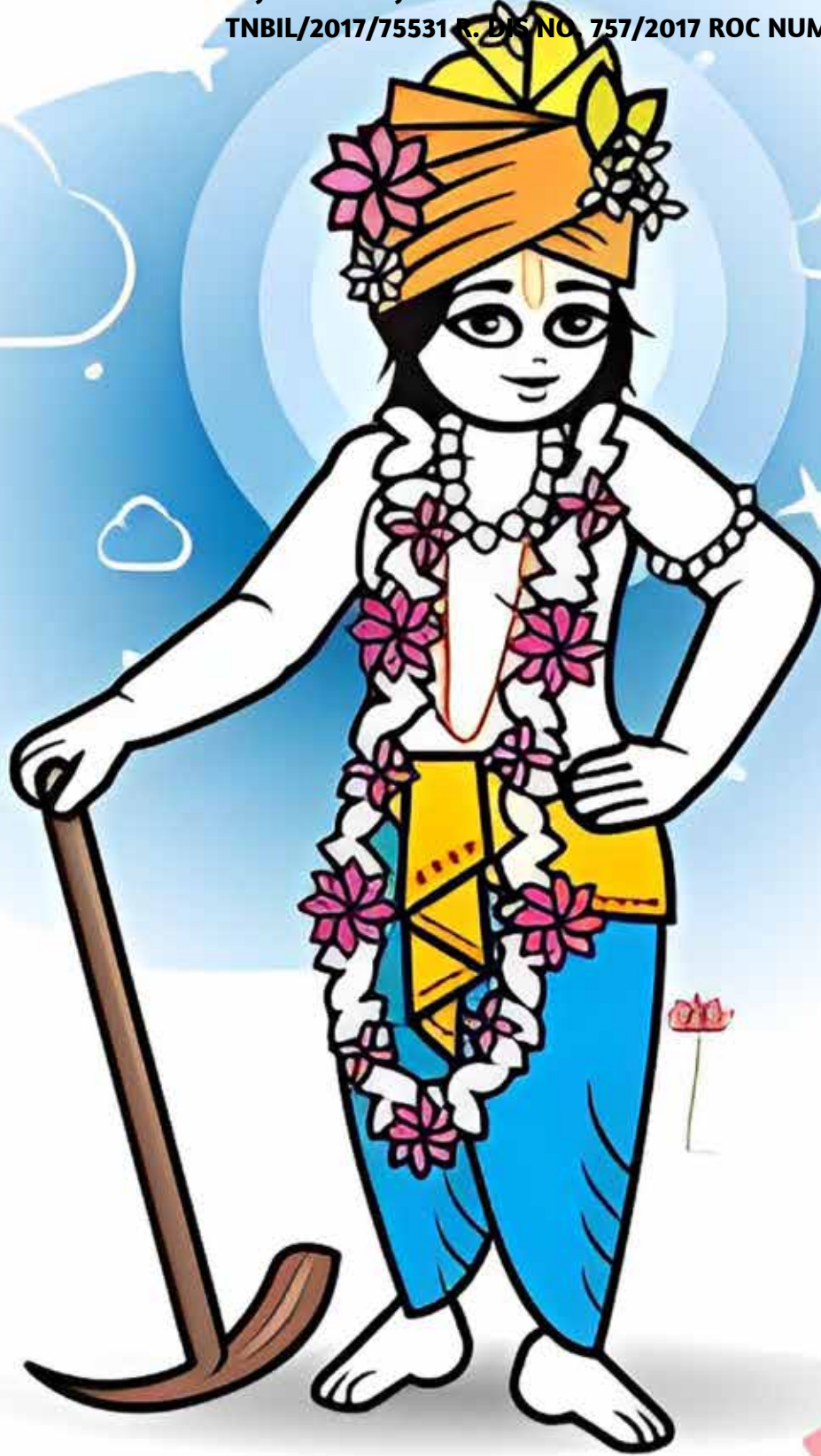
M G Road Vijayawda AP

Owned, Published & Printed by INDIRA SRIVATSA,
Printed at SRI AATHI LAKSHMI GRAPHICS,
14/33, Sivan Koil Cross Street, Kodambakkam, Chennai - 600024 &
Published from E 002, Premier Grihalakshmi Apartments,
Elango Nagar South, Virugambakkam, Chennai - 600092.
EDITOR: INDIRA SRIVATSA

ஏ டீ இஸ்ட் இந்தியா

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Lord Balarama is worshipped as 8th incarnation of Lord Vishnu. The birth anniversary of Lord Balarama is observed as Balarama Jayanti. Balarama was the elder brother of Lord Krishna.

Lord Balarama is also worshipped as an Avatar of Adishesha, the serpent on which Lord Vishnu rests.

Balarama is also known as Baladeva, Balabhadra and Halayudha.

HAPPY BALARAMA JAYANTI 2023